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## THE NEW TESTAMENT AS INTERPRETER OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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The method of determining the exegetical value of the New Testament would seem to be simple enough. Here is an ancient book from which citations are made in another ancient book. Are the citations correctly made and used? To answer this question in any given case, all that is necessary is to fix the text and meaning of the two passages, by scientific principles of interpretation, and compare them.

There are, to be sure, one or two complications, which, however, need not seriously embarrass the solution of the question. In the first place we are not absolutely certain that we have the complete original text of either Old Testament or New Testament. Our present Hebrew text, as is well known, depends upon MSS. of which scarcely one is older than the tenth century of our era. This Massoretic text may sometimes be controlled by the Greek, Aramaic and Latin versions, though there are many cases in which these offer little or no help, and our dependence has to be on the traditional Hebrew form. We know that this Hebrew text has been jealously guarded probably from about the beginning of our era; but what may have been its fortunes before this time, when for hundreds of years there was no authentic collection of the ancient Hebrew literature, when books were copied by unknown men under unknown circumstances, when we have good reason to believe that scribes took large liberties with their manuscripts, adding to or taking from the material, and combining two or more books in one manuscript, when the unintentional errors of one scribe might often be perpetuated by his successors, when there was no critical public to watch over the destinies of books,—what, under these conditions, may have been the fortunes of the Hebrew text, who can tell?

The history of the New Testament text is in general similar to that just described. The large number of errors in the received text has recently been brought to light by the Canterbury revision. The texts now generally accepted, those of Tischendorf and Westcott and Hort, rest almost entirely on two or three manuscripts of the fourth and fifth centuries, controlled in a measure by the Syriac and Latin versions. Yet in not a few cases the different testimonies are so discordant that an absolute decision is impossible, and the history of the New Testament writings between the date of their composition and the appearance of the earliest version is involved in the same obscurity which shrouds the early history of the Hebrew text. We are to a certain extent at the mercy of the scribes whose methods of copying we do not know.

Yet for the body of Old Testament and New Testament writings we may be reasonably sure that we have in substance the thought of the original authors. There may be uncertainty about particular words, sentences, or paragraphs; but

the probability is not great that a succession of scribes extending through several centuries could have quite transformed the body of their texts. For purposes of historical investigation, the best modern editions of Old Testament and New Testament texts may be accepted as substantially correct; for the former Hahn, and Baer and Delitzsch, and for the latter Tischendorf, and Westcott and Hort. These do not claim absolute verbal accuracy, but they may fairly be regarded as containing no very important errors in text or words. And so far as the broader criticism is concerned, the investigation of the integrity or composition of the various books, this must of course follow its own principles in general dependence on the best attainable text.

Another complication is found in the fact that the New Testament writers quote not from the Hebrew but from some version, more generally the Septuagint. In such cases, it becomes necessary to compare the version with the Hebrew and determine, if possible, the original form of the text. If the translation of the version be perfectly correct, then our question is the same as if the quotation were made immediately from the correct Hebrew. If the translation be not correct, then the quotation is not, strictly speaking, from the Old Testament but from another book; the question would then be first, whether the New Testament writer has correctly understood the version from which he cites, and then, whether the version gives the substantial sense of the original or whether it departs therefrom in an important degree. If the New Testament author has only, for example, the Septuagint before him, we cannot hold him responsible, as an interpreter, for the errors of his version; we must recognize and commend his exegetical qualities if his employment of his text is accurate. But if this text be not that of the Hebrew Old Testament, he is in so far an expounder not of the Old Testament, but of the version. In the case of each quotation, therefore, it will be necessary to decide whether it is the Hebrew or the Greek or some other version that is cited.

Still another introductory question arises in connection with certain of the quotations: What is the meaning of the expression that occurs so frequently in the Gospels in connection with various incidents in the life of Jesus:—"That it might be fulfilled"? Similar phrases occur in the epistles of Paul and in the epistle to the Hebrews. Are we to understand that the New Testament writer intends to declare in such cases that there is the fulfillment of a prediction? And if so, does he mean that this remote fulfillment was had in view by the Old Testament writer? or only that, without the prescience of the latter, God had brought it about that certain declarations should be illustrated and fulfilled in the life of Jesus or in the history of the early Christian church? So far as the mere wording of the expression goes, either of these views of its meaning might be maintained. In each case we have to decide as best we may the import of the expression in question, from the tone of the New Testament writer and the general direction of his narrative.

Putting such passages aside, we may examine the citations in which the main point is the correctness of the use of the Old Testament made by New Testament writers.

Let us take for example the passage Matthew 8:17 quoted from Isa. 53:4. The Hebrew reads: "Our sicknesses he bore and our pains he carried them," which is rendered with sufficient exactness in the Gospel: "Himself took our weak-

nesses and bore our diseases." The prophet means to represent the servant of Yahweh, of whom he is speaking, as suffering vicariously for the nation, enduring sorrows produced by the national sin, and through this suffering eventually conquering peace and purity for his people. The picture is clear enough ; a righteous person involved in suffering through no fault of his own, but by virtue of his close relations to a sinful community, suffering of mind and of body inflicted on him by his enemies. In the Gospel the sense given to these words is certainly different from this. "They brought to Jesus," says the evangelist, "many possessed with demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled that was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying," etc. Here Jesus is represented as taking into his own body and bearing the diseases which he expelled from the bodies of others, a conception strange in itself and foreign to the thought of the prophet. The meaning of the evangelist has been supposed to be that Jesus by his suffering procured pardon and peace for men, but in the passage in Matthew there is no word of spiritual experience or faith on the part of those who were treated ; it was simply a bodily cure effected in them, and Jesus is said thereby, in accordance with the prediction of the prophet Isaiah, to have borne men's diseases ; the natural understanding of this seems to be that he assumed the diseases which he healed. It may be added that the natural signification of the phrase, "that it might be fulfilled," is that these healing acts of Jesus were definitely predicted by the prophet in the passage cited.

In Matthew 21:5 there is a curious misapprehension of the Hebrew expression quoted from Zech. 9:9. The evangelist relates that two disciples were directed to go to a village and to bring an ass and a colt which they should find there ; this they are said to have done ; they "brought the ass and the colt and put on them their garments, and he sat thereon." The evangelist adds that all this was done that the word of the prophet might be fulfilled : "Behold thy king comes to thee meek and riding on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass." The words "ass" and "colt" are understood in the New Testament use of the expression to mean two different animals, the ass being represented as the mother of the colt, whereas in the Old Testament passage, the two words mean one animal, being simply used in a sort of poetic parallelism, "an ass, that is, a colt of the ass species," both words being masculine in the Hebrew.

A quotation which deals in an extraordinary manner with the Hebrew text is that in Matthew 27:9,10 from Zech. 11:13 (the ascription to Jeremiah in Matthew is doubtless a mere clerical error). The stress of the citation is made to turn in the Gospel on a word which in all probability does not properly belong in the Hebrew at all and gives it a sense quite foreign to the meaning of the prophet. The passage in Zechariah reads : "And Yahweh said to me, Throw it to the potter —a goodly price at which I am priced by them ! And I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of Yahweh to the potter." The evangelist declares this to be a prediction of the purchase of the potter's field with the thirty pieces of silver which Judas returned to the priests. The word "potter" in the Hebrew is suspicious ; one does not know what a potter should be doing in the temple and why the prophet should throw the money to him. The change of one Hebrew consonant gives us "treasury" instead of "potter" (**אֲזֶר** for **אֲצָר**), which is a natural sense in the connection ; and it is curious that in the Gospel

(v. 6), the priests say that it is not lawful to put this money into the treasury, which was in general the obvious place for money. "Potter" is not found in the Septuagint text, which misread the Hebrew in another way; the reading in the Gospel comes from some corrupt text of the time. But this is not the only departure from the Hebrew in Matthew. There it is the first person, "I took and threw;" here it is the third person plural, "They took and gave;" in the Greek the form of the verb admits of either rendering and it was perhaps from a Greek version that the evangelist took that form which best agreed with the transaction to which he referred. Further, the Hebrew text says only that the money was thrown to the potter; in the Gospel it is represented as saying that "they" gave it for the potter's field, another variation for which it is hard to account, for in the prophet nothing is said of a field or a purchase. These combined changes give a sense which we may fairly say does not belong to the prophetic passage. In Zechariah the prophet in the symbolic procedure which he is describing receives from the people the price of his religious care over them, a price ridiculously small, which he takes and not without contempt throws into the treasury of the temple. The emphasis is not on the place into which he puts the money—this was of course the treasury—but on the smallness of the price at which the people of Israel estimated the instruction of Yahweh's prophet and in the fact that they were so willing to give up his services. What he means to say is simply that Israel cared little for the instruction and guidance of their God since they so readily dissolved the connection between themselves and His appointed minister. There is a general parallelism between the two transactions in question, in so far as the betrayal of Jesus to the priests might have been regarded by the evangelist as a betrayal by the people of God's minister and therefore an abandonment of God himself. The parallelism is not faithful in the details, for it is the traitor Judas whose price is estimated by the priests at thirty pieces of silver; or, if it be Judas himself who puts the price of his God at thirty pieces, he cannot fairly be taken as the representative of the people. And further, as is pointed out above, the stress in the two passages is by no means the same; in the prophet it is on the smallness of the price; in the Gospel it is on the purchase of the potter's field.

John 19:37 is another example of an interpretation based on a wrong translation. The original passage, Zech. 12:10, reads: "They shall look to me in respect to [or in behalf of] him whom they have pierced [that is, slain]." The prophet, speaking in the name of Yahweh, is describing the situation in Judah in his own day and predicting a happier future. We gather from his words that the feeling between the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding rural districts was an unfriendly one, and he predicts a coming reconciliation between the two parties. "And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Yahweh of hosts their God. In that day I will make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire in the midst of wood, and like a torch of fire among sheaves, and they shall devour on the right hand and on the left all the people round about, and Jerusalem [that is, the population of Jerusalem] shall yet dwell in its own place, in Jerusalem. And Yahweh will save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah." After declaring that Yahweh will endue the house of David with mighty strength and will seek to destroy all

the nations that come up against Jerusalem, the prophecy continues: “And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication [that is, they shall have a kindly and prayerful disposition], and they shall look to me in behalf of him whom they pierced [slew], and shall mourn for him. In that day the mourning shall be great in Jerusalem.” Here is a strife between the two parties which came to blows. Some of the inhabitants of the country districts, a region evidently looked down upon by the haughty inhabitants of the capital, had been slain, and Yahweh, says the prophet, will so change the disposition of the proud Jerusalemites that their souls shall become kindly, they shall mourn over their brother slain and shall turn their eyes to God in respect to him, asking pardon for their sin in slaying him. The Hebrew text represents the people as looking to God, and the person who is pierced [that is, slain] is distinguished from God. The evangelist renders: “They shall look on him whom they pierced.” The substitution of “him” for “me” is supported by a few manuscripts and Jewish commentators, but the mass of manuscripts and all the versions sustain the present Hebrew text, that is, the person who is pierced is not, as the evangelist represents it, the same as he on whom they look. Further, the rendering, “whom they pierced,” is inadmissible; the ‘ēth separates the relative from the preceding pronoun.

Another mistranslation in the New Testament which is found also in the Septuagint and Latin vulgate is the rendering “shall be blest” instead of “shall bless themselves” in Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8; from Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 26:4: “All the families of the earth shall bless themselves in thee.” The signification of the expression, “to bless one person in another,” is given in Gen. 48:20, where Jacob calls for the sons of Joseph and blesses them, saying: “In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh;” that is, the prosperity of the sons of Joseph was to be so great that other nations should take them as types and standards of happiness, and should be able to think of no greater blessing for men than that they should be like these. An equally clear explanation occurs in Ps. 72:17: “His name shall endure forever; His name shall remain as long as the sun, and all nations shall bless themselves in him, shall call him happy.” Here it is plain that the Psalmist is speaking of the happy fortunes of the king, and the expression “call him happy” is parallel and equivalent to “shall bless themselves in him.” The same form of the Hebrew verb (*h̄ȳth pāēl*) is found in Gen. 22:18 and 26:4, and a similar form (*n̄iphāēl*) in Gen. 12:3 and 18:18. Israel, like Ephraim and Manasseh and the king in Ps. 72, is to be so wonderfully blest by God that the other nations shall think no lot superior, and when they would invoke prosperity on friends shall choose Yahweh’s people as the norm and standard of happiness. The promise on the face of it refers simply to the national prosperity, and says nothing of a moral or religious influence of Israel on the other nations. It is true that such an influence did afterwards exist, but it is not referred to in these Old Testament passages, nor is there any hint in text or context that the thought of such influence was in the mind of the writer. The New Testament passages in Acts and Galatians see here a prediction of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world, a meaning which, if the above exposition be correct, is not found in the passages quoted.

The same remark may be made on Paul’s argument in Gal. 3:16, based on the word “seed” as being singular and not plural. The promise, says he, was to

Abraham and his seed, not the plural "seeds," as if many were intended, but the promise refers to one person, "thy seed," which he says is Christ. It is well known that the Hebrew word used in Genesis is a collective noun identical in meaning with our "posternity," and cannot in itself, by virtue of its form, point to an individual. If such a reference to an individual is intended, it must be made clear by the context. But in the Old Testament passages cited, there is no such explanatory mention of an individual; on the contrary, the context shows that it is the nation Israel that is meant, nor is there in all the Old Testament a passage suggesting any other signification for the expression in question. No one versed in Old Testament Hebrew would ever think of making such an argument based on the singular form of the word *zera*. How, then, did the Apostle Paul come to employ such a method of reasoning? The explanation is that in the later Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic of Paul's time, the singular number of the word was employed for an individual, and a plural made from it to express "posternity;" and Paul, familiar with this current usage and unfamiliar with Old Testament Hebrew, transfers it to the Old Testament passage. In the same way in the *Midrash rabba*, on Ruth 4:14, the term "seed" is interpreted of the Messiah. Paul conceived that the form of the word necessarily involved the reference to an individual; he says that inasmuch as it is singular and not plural, it cannot mean the nation, but must mean the Messiah.

In Paul's argument in the fourth chapter of Romans there is lack of precision in the statement in v. 3 sqq., that Abraham's faith, the basis of his justification, was something wholly different from works. The idea in Gen. 15:6 is that God reckoned Abraham's trust in him as a righteous thing, as a righteous act, and it is therefore to be considered a righteous work. We cannot but share in the apostle's indignation against the religious formalism of his time, which undertook to substitute a set of ritual proceedings for inward righteousness, and in so far as an act of faith is a spiritual work, we must grant the propriety of the argument which sets it far above and in a different category from merely formal and outward acts of obedience. But in so far as the apostle may wish to take Abraham's act out of the category of human activities, that he may annihilate all human righteousness in order to substitute for it the righteousness of Christ as the ground of salvation, we must doubt whether he finds basis for this view in the Old Testament. In general, Paul's sharp antithesis of faith and works is not an Old Testament idea. The passage in Hab. 2:3,4, which is translated in Romans 1:17; Gal. 3:11: "The just shall live by faith," is more properly rendered, "The just shall live by his constancy." It is fidelity to God's commands, according to the Old Testament view, which is the condition and surety of man's deliverance and blessing. The rule of salvation in the law, says the apostle, is "He who is obedient shall live," and he shows the impossibility of salvation under the law by pointing out the impossibility of complete obedience. The argument would be sound if the Old Testament insisted on absolute perfection of obedience; but it uses the word "perfect" of man, as in Job's case, for example, in a restricted sense. What was demanded was a controlling spirit of obedience, and occasional errors were forgiven if the man repented, or in certain cases sacrifices were appointed. Or, in the later times we find in certain Psalms, as in the 18th and 44th, confident assertions of personal perfectness: "I have kept the ways of Yahweh; I was perfect with him; therefore he has recompensed me according to my

righteousness." "We have not forgotten thee nor dealt falsely in thy covenant." The Old Testament knows no other condition of the enjoyment of the divine favor than faithful obedience. The man's record is based on his voluntary activity, which, when sincere, is of course always accompanied by trust in God. But the apostle, instead of conceiving of the Old Testament ideal as obedience permeated with and inspired by trust, makes a sharp contrast between the trust and the obedience, a procedure which he thinks necessary in order to break down the current Jewish theory of salvation by an obedience which constantly ran the risk of becoming mere formalism. What the narration of Abraham's life in Genesis means to declare is that Abraham was justified by his obedience, that is, by his works, though this obedience was as a matter of course grounded on confidence in the truth of the divine promise; and in Gen. 15:6 his trust in the divine promise, his voluntary act, was reckoned as an act of righteousness: so that, in so far as his faith was ground of salvation, his righteousness was equally the ground of salvation.

One of the hardest passages in Paul's writings to comprehend is his definition of the righteousness which is of faith, in Rom. 10:6-8, taken in free translation with explanatory insertions from the Septuagint of Deut. 30:12-14. The difficulty lies in the fact that the passage in Deuteronomy refers without any doubt to obedience to the law: "This commandment which I command thee this day," says Moses, "is not too hard nor far off, nor in heaven nor beneath the sea, but nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Yet the apostle cites this passage as the utterance of the righteousness which is of faith, "because," says he, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." And that he intends to refer it to the Messiah is evident from his explanatory additions: "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is to bring Christ down)? or, Who shall descend into the abyss (that is to bring Christ up from the dead)?" We do not know how to explain his use of the passage except by supposing that he took it as a completely isolated expression, without reference to the context, and attached to it his own meaning, interpreting the "word" in a sense entirely different from that which the connection demands.

A similar example of the apostle's habit of using Old Testament passages without regard to the Hebrew or to the context, occurs in Rom. 14:10-12, where he seeks to guard his brethren against hasty judgments of one another, by reminding them of the final divine judgment: "But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God." The fact of a final judgment he wishes to establish or impress by a Scripture quotation, and he cites Isa. 45:23, which he renders: "As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God." But the prophet is simply announcing the acceptance of the worship of Yahweh by all the nations. It is Yahweh himself who speaks: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is not another; by myself I have sworn, the word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow; every tongue shall swear; truly in Yahweh, shall one say to me, is righteousness." "Men," says the prophet, "shall swear by him;" that is shall accept him as the holiest, as the true God. There is no word of a judg-

ment, least of all, of a judgment after death. The apostle changes “swear by” or “swear to” into “confess to,” a meaning the Hebrew will not bear. A similar meaning, however, belongs to an Aramaic word (Pael of **מִתְּחַדֵּר**) used in the Targum of Jonathan as the rendering of the Hebrew expression for “swear,” and as the apostle’s vernacular was an Aramaic dialect, he may have got his translation “confess” from some current Aramaic version. That he quotes the Old Testament passage as proof of a final judgment is evident from his concluding words: “so then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Much stranger is the use which Paul makes of Isa. 28:11,12, in his discussion of the Charismata in 1 Cor. 14:20 seq., where he makes a comparison between prophesying and speaking with tongues in respect to their utility. He wishes to show that prophesying is a higher and more edifying gift, meant to promote the well-being of believers, while the glossolaly was a sign for unbelievers and therefore less to be desired by the Corinthian Christians. His proof of this last fact is derived from the passage in Isaiah, which he renders, following neither Hebrew nor Septuagint: “By people of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak to this people, and not even thus will they hear me, says the Lord.” The prophetic “strange tongue” is simply a foreign language; that is, a foreign nation with which the careless, disobedient population of Jerusalem is threatened as a punishment for their godlessness. All of them, says Isaiah, including priest and prophet, have erred through strong drink, and come to God’s messenger babbling out their drunken objections to his message. Let them babble, but “with stammerings of lip and with another tongue will he speak to his people, because he said to them, This is the rest, give you rest to the weary, and this is the repose—but they will not hear.” The people of Israel would not listen to the prophet’s message of peace, the only true repose of trust in Yahweh, and now God would teach them a stern lesson with the whip of a foreign people speaking with stammering of lips more serious than the babbling of the Jerusalem debauchees. Contrast this with the Corinthian glossolaly, a spiritual gift exercised by believers in the interest of religion, though, as the apostle points out, not always wisely and well.

Another instructive citation is that in Eph. 4:8 from Ps. 68:19(18). The passage in the Psalm describes the God of Israel as a conquering king leading his captives taken in war and ascending the throne where he receives gifts from subject nations. “Thou didst receive gifts among men” (Hebrew and Greek). In the epistle this is interpreted of Christ as a victorious monarch who ascended into heaven after having descended into Hades; but instead of receiving gifts from men, he is there said to have given gifts to men. The same change from “received” to “gave” is found in the Peshitto-Syriac and the Targum, and we may therefore suppose that the text of the epistle came from some similar Aramaic reading. The Hebrew reading is evidently the correct one, and the alteration of the text came perhaps from the feeling in later times that it was not appropriate to the Divine Majesty to receive gifts.

The influence of the Septuagint is seen in Eph. 4:26, a citation from Ps. 4:5(4). The Hebrew reads: “Stand in awe and sin not,” a warning to certain men to cherish such awe of the holy and powerful God of Israel as should deter them from falling into sins that would excite his anger. The Septuagint, followed by the epistle, translates: “Be angry and sin not,” whence in the epistle the rule

of moderation of anger, an admirable moral precept, but not contained in the Psalm.

The epistle to the Hebrews contains a large number of citations from the Old Testament, the majority of which it may fairly be said do not follow the rules of what we regard as correct exegesis. One of these citations appears to be from a Septuagint passage which is not found in the Hebrew at all, namely, 1:6: "And let all the angels of God worship him." This might conceivably come from the Greek of Psalm 96:7 (Heb. 97:7): "Worship him, all ye his angels," in which "angels" is an incorrect rendering of the Hebrew *elohim*; the psalm is really a summons to heathen deities to worship Yahweh: "Shame on all the worshipers of graven images, they that make boast in idols; worship him all ye gods." But the citation in Hebrews follows word for word the Greek of Deut. 32:43. The cited words are an expansion from Old Testament material such as that of Ps. 97:7. The Song of Moses in which they occur ends with a description of the divine vengeance on the enemies of Israel, and the honor which is therefore to be ascribed to him. This is interpreted in the epistle in a Messianic sense, and the hymn is represented as bringing the first begotten [the Messiah] into the world, that is, as introducing him to Israel and inducting him into his office as the saviour of his people.

The way in which an erroneous Greek punctuation may lead to a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of the Hebrew is well illustrated in the citation from Isa. 8:17,18 in Hebrews 2:13. The burden of the prophet's preaching had been the necessity of trust in Yahweh against the power of the hostile kings of Syria and Israel. He was commanded to give to his children symbolical names which should be signs of God's dealing with the nation, Shearyashub, "a remnant shall return," and Mahershalalhashbaz, "haste-spoil-hurry-prey," so that they and he might be omens and guides to the depressed and unbelieving people. And so he says: "I will hope in him. Behold, I and the children whom Yahweh has given me are signs and omens in Israel." The Greek rendered this with general correctness except that it wrongly divided the second sentence: "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me; and they shall be signs and wonders in the house of Israel." The author of the epistle takes the first half out of connection: "Behold, I and the children whom God has given me," and interprets it to mean the oneness of Jesus with his disciples, and hence the necessity of an incarnation. A simple grammatical Messianic interpretation would have understood it as declaring that the Messiah and his people were signs of God's presence in the church and of the divine method of dealing with men; the conjunction of the Messiah and men who believed on him could prove only a oneness of aim between them, not an identity of nature.

One object of the epistle to the Hebrews is to comfort the suffering Christians of the time with the hope of coming happiness, and it seeks to find Scripture demonstration of the Messianic Sabbath rest, the bodily and spiritual peace which the followers of Christ should enjoy when he should come at the end of the present age to establish his everlasting kingdom. This argument (Heb. 3:7-4:11) is drawn from Ps. 9:57-11: "O that ye would hear his voice to-day! Harden not your heart as at Meribah \*\*\* Forty years I loathed that generation and said, They are a people that err in their hearts and they know not my ways. So that I sware in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest." Here is no promise, but the state-

ment of a fact in the far past; the people had been disobedient in the wilderness and God declared that as a punishment they should not enter Canaan. The epistle holds that the last words of the Psalm passage contain a promise which had not yet been fulfilled, since it was given after God had instituted the weekly Sabbath (Gen. 2:2) and also after Joshua had led the people into the rest of Canaan, and hence that there remained a rest for the people of God, which could only be the Messianic Sabbath.

A similar mode of argumentation is adopted in Heb. 8:8-12, where the author discusses the "new covenant" of Jer. 31:31-34. The epistle understands this to mean the abolition of the Levitical system of daily sacrifice in favor of the Christian scheme of the sacrifice of himself which Christ made once for all. But the prophet's antithesis of new and old is something different. He thinks not of abolishing the national system of sacrifices, but only of the introduction of a spirit of obedience. His contrast is between the present ignorant rebellious life of the nation, and a reconstruction in which the people would give an intelligent and glad assent to the commands of their God. A fulfillment of this prediction in Christianity might be sought in its pure and lofty spirit of obedience, in the new heart which, as Jeremiah and Ezekiel say, God would give to men, a heart to apprehend the righteousness and goodness of his services; of the sacrificial system there is not a word in either of these prophets, in this connection.

In Heb. 10:5-7 an argument in the same direction is made from the word "body" which occurs in the Septuagint rendering of Ps. 40:7-9 (6-8): "Sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired, but a body thou hast prepared me; \* \* \* then I said, Lo, I come \* \* \* to do thy will, O my God, is my delight." The interpretation of this in the epistle is as follows: The Messiah speaks: "The old Levitical sacrifice thou dost not desire, and therefore thou hast prepared my body as a sacrifice, and I come to do thy will by the offering of myself, once for all." The contrast thus ascribed in the epistle to the Psalmist between two sorts of sacrifice is not that of the Psalmist himself, who, on the contrary, puts obedience over against sacrifice: "Thou dost not desire the ordinary sacrifice, which is a mere outward thing; what will please thee is to do thy will, and in this I delight." The rendering "body" is impossible.

An example of an undesirable though not very important mistranslation occurs in Heb. 11:21: "Jacob worshiped [leaning on] the top of his staff." The Hebrew has: "Jacob bowed himself on the head of the bed." The Hebrew words for bed and staff have the same consonants. The Catholic-English translation of 1582 renders, as is well known, "Jacob worshiped the top of his rod," and explains the rod as a figure of the scepter and kingdom of Christ.

It appears from these examples that in certain cases the New Testament use of Old Testament passages is not correct. Sometimes the text is inaccurate, sometimes the exegesis. The number of these cases is considerable, and the conclusion is that a New Testament interpretation cannot be accepted without examination, but must always be tested by hermeneutical principles.